The Theosophical FORUM

AUGUST 1903

OUR ARTICLES:

	PAGE
* * *	61
HABIT OF MIND	63
SHANKARA'S PHILOSOPHY	65
HEART'S DESIRE	70
SCIENTIFIC NECESSITY OF REINCARNATION	74
RICHARD STRAUSS, TSCHAIKOWSKY AND THE IDEA OF DEATH	78

ISSUED MONTHLY

VOL. 9 NO. 4

Flushing

New York

Ten Cents a Copy One Dollar Yearly

An Outline of the Secret Doctrine:

COSMOGENESIS.

A series of articles with this title was published twelve years ago in LUCIFER, an attempt being made to follow the Stanzas, and to make clear the metaphysical and scientific principles involved in the teaching of the Building of the Worlds.

Repeated requests have been made to the Editor of the THEOSOPHICAL FORUM to reprint these articles, but it may be more advisable to issue them in book form, uniform with ANCIENT AND MODERN PHYSICS. Readers who approve of this suggestion are invited to send an expression of their views to

CHARLES JOHNSTON,

FLUSHING, NEW YORK.

"A New Pamphlet on Karma."

A copy of this pamphlet will be sent gratis to any reader of the Forum who will send his name and address on a postcard to the publisher. Thomas Green, 10 Park Road Mansions, Wandsworth Common, London, S. W. For Propaganda purposes copies will be supplied at 3 cents each plus postage at the rate of 16 cents per dozen. Payment may be made in postage stamps.

Entered at the Post Office at Flushing, N. Y., as second-class matter, April 20, 1901.

THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM

VOL. 9. AUGUST, 1903 No. 4

* * *

The one road open to those who long for spiritual growth is the road of aspiration.

It is in fact the Path; and the reason for this is obvious. Aspiration is always possible: if we think long and intently upon any subject the way is often blocked by fatigue; the brain is tired or exhausted, as we say, and no longer acts or responds readily to our efforts. But when we aspire there is no brain fatigue.

The soul or higher Ego expresses itself on and through desire, and desire is longing which we might call the interior process of aspiration.

No soul is ever quite incapable of aspiring—for all souls have desires and longings for something better than they know. The highest expression of the full born soul is found in aspiration—and in flight upwards from the world of material limitation to the boundless plane of immaterial hope no obstacle interposes, no exists.

Every one can long for goodness, every one can desire purity, every one can hope to become unselfish—every one can *desire* "that which is beyond knowledge."

And through aspiration the path to higher experience will inevitably open up, that which the soul gives out in longing for the best, will come back to it in full measure, "pressed down and running over," as happiness, as joy, as bliss.

HABIT OF MIND.

In the phenomenal world, acts habitually repeated tend to perpetuate themselves, thus forming types.

Each single act, the impression of which is sufficiently clear, forms a basis for its objectivation. In the beginning its recurrence is brought about by the use of memory, and later on by memory and its own impetus added to memory, through which repetition becomes more frequent, coming, as it were, of itself, without effort on our part.

The same law is true in the domain of thought, but there it is more intense, more precise and more potent and its scope is larger, because we are able to recall a thought at will and with an unlimited frequency.

How often do we despair about a fancied impotence of ours in one direction or another, saying: It is impossible for me to do this or that, my mind is so constituted as not to allow of any other expression than the one familiar to me at present. We do not realize or want to realize that this expression is wholly within our control and direction. The thought is ever the stimulus of the act and the habit of directing it into a definite channel will ultimately incite a corresponding act.

Therefore it is wholly within our power to acquire control and learn to direct our desires as well as to create the foundation for a proper course of action.

Few of us realize that when we become slaves to some dominant thought, it is an indication that we have fostered in our hearts an undue amount of energy, tending towards our personal interest.

What is so often called natural impulse is generally instinct perverted by the habitual wrong thought of a fanciful mind. We must ever remember that the mind, as well as any other organ, can not be taken for an absolute guide, being subject to making mistakes and going into abuses, which are very potent in their reactions.

Now, we are subject to habits of thought and act only in that degree in which we are willing to stimulate them and give them impetus.

Therefore it is of the highest importance that we analize,

check and direct the mind through the will. Through the persistence of fanciful images, which our thought has made strong by indulgence, good instincts are as it were transposed and made to lend their energy to the wrong powers in us. Therefore I repeat once more, if we must act from habit, let us acquire such tendencies and dispositions, which will tend to accumulate a force gravitating towards the greater, the universal. But let us not act wholly from habit, but ever from moral incentive, at the same time keeping our minds flexible, so as to be able to encompass that, which may yet be known and which is not as yet within our tenets.

And throughout all our labor, let discrimination and sympathy be ever our guide.

SHANKARA'S PHILOSOPHY.

It is very remarkable that we still know nothing for certain of the date of so striking a personality, so great a man as Shankaracharya. In all the later ages of India, there are only two men whose work is of universal significance, Gautama Buddha, and Shankaracharya; and of these two it is hardly to be doubted that Shankara has had a far deeper influence on Indian thought and life. And besides this, whatever doubts we have of Shankara's date, we are quite certain that he lived somewhat later than Buddha; so that the events of his life should be far more certain and easily ascertained, and yet quite the contrary is the case. Buddha's date can be fixed by several independent lines of evidence; his life has been written in many of the languages of Asia, and the great events of his wonderful career stand out clear and sharp, almost free from the mists of historical uncertainty. But of Shankara, what can we tell for certain? And yet Shankara was not a man to pass unnoticed by his contemporaries; his work was not such as to remain hidden for a time, or cherished only among an obscure, uninfluential band of faithful followers; to be made known only by the gradual recognition of later ages.

Had Shankara been only the commentator on the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, and the Vedanta Sutras, it would be credible that his life might have been lived in seclusion, and that only the lapse of time would have revealed the excellence of his work; and in this way we could understand that the outward events of his life might have passed unnoticed until the time had gone by when they could be ascertained exactly. But Shankara was a great deal more than this, a great deal more than an excellent commentator on the most valuable books of Ancient India. He was the founder of a philosophy which, for lucidity, profundity, self-evident truth, and beauty of illustration, can match anything the great masters of the world have produced; and, lastly, he was a practical reformer, who achieved, as far as we can judge, entire success, and whose influence on the most learned and powerful section of the Indian peoples has been so deep and lasting that he has simply overshadowed every one else for a series of centuries, and is to-day absolutely predominant in Indian thought.

Here then is the perplexing element in the matter: that of a man of this magnitude we should have to say his influence has been predominant for a "series of centuries"; and that we should not be able to say, with any certainty at all, how many these centuries are. Even learned natives of India, excellent Sanskritists, Vedantins, who have "sworn into the words of this master," have to fix his date by the chance, uncertain remark of a Chinese traveller. The thing is absolutely without a parallel in the history of the modern world. It is as if those in Europe had to fix Julius Caesar's date by a chance notice of some Ethiopian chronicler, although Caesar's influence on modern Europe is so great that his family name has been made the proudest title of all our living Emperors.

The thing is incomprehensible; or would be, in any land except India, among any people except the Brahmins, Shankara did not appear among an illiterate people, for we have seen recently that it is morally certain that the people of India were familiar with writing three thousand years ago, long before Buddha's day, and therefore still longer before Shankara's. There was, therefore, every opportunity for Shankara's life to be put on record. His influence was great during his life-time. He founded three great centres of philosophy, with Shringeri in Mysore at their head; and his successors have been uninterrupted till the present day. It is quite certain that the Brhadaranyaka Uuanishad is one of the oldest of the theosophic treatises in India; and yet we find in this ancient book several lists of spiritual successions, "Guru-parampara chains," which show us that the practice of recording the spiritual succession of teachers was known in India from very early times. Is it, then, possible that the Guru-parampara chain, the list of spiritual successors, of Shankara could have failed to be preserved, from the year of his reforms, in the schools of philosophy which he founded himself? It is almost certain that the chain of Gurus must have been preserved, not only at Shringeri, but also in the other *maths*. True, we have already obtained from Brahmins several lists which claim to be true copies of the Shankara chains; but even they are not quite satisfactory. They do not all perfectly agree. And several have assigned to an immediate successor of Shankara a chiefship of eight hundred years. They cannot, therefore, be authentic copies of an authentic con-

temporary record; and although it is incredible that lists of Shankara's successors should not exist, it is certain that they are not genuinely represented in the lists we have seen. We must, therefore, satisfy ourselves with hoping that a genuine list of the Gurus of each of Shankara's *maths* may some day be published by the authorities of the *maths* themselves; for only thus can the date of one of the greatest men in the History of India, or, indeed, in the history of the world, be finally and satisfactorily established. Till this is done, Shankara's followers must reconcile themselves to the date of their splendid patron being fixed on the most empirical grounds, by a series of airy hypotheses; or on the chance remark of some travelling Chinaman. Now that the transcendant value of Shankara's philosophy is recognised as clearly in the West as in the East, it would be an act of wisdom as well as of grace for the best of his followers in India to establish his date once for all on irrefutable evidence.

But the value of Shankara's philosophy does not in any way depend on his date. Its value is exactly the same, whether Shankara lived only yesterday or two thousand years ago. The progress of the centuries and ages makes little difference to the great problems of Being which Shankara set himself to solve. The only influence of time seems to be the alteration of periods of lucidity and periods of stupidity, which succeed each other like the white and black fortnights of the moon. It was certainly a black fortnight when the great Church Council declared that the earth was flat; a "black fortnight," which lingered till the burning of Giordano Bruno ushered in the seventeenth century of our era. We have issued from the blackness of that period of stupidity in some measure to-day; but in many things we are a long way behind the period of lucidity of Periclean Greece, and Greece was, in many things, the inferior of older Egypt; while Egypt might happily have had much to learn from still older India.

So that it matters very little when Shankara worked, as far as the intrinsic excellence of his philosophy is concerned. Many have many a time insisted on the enormous antiquity of man in these columns, and we may do so once again by saying that, as far as philosophy is concerned, the fundamental problems of knowledge hardly altered at all in the last million

years; and that our means of solving them have altered about as little. We stand face to face with the same old universe, the same pictures of river and mountain, of the sleepless sea, and the silent stars unfolding themselves. We appear in the midst of the great picture gallery; gaze a while, and then disappear.

Before all things, Shankara was an Idealist. The universe has, he says, only a dependent reality; it is like the snake which a man thinks he sees, where there is no snake at all, but a coil of rope. It is like a dream, very coherent and convincing while it lasts; but we shall presently wake, and then it will wear another face. An idealist cannot be made by argument; a man is a "naïve realist" as the Germans say, until he reaches insight; until he realises for himself that he has no evidence, and never can have any evidence, of the existence of outer things, beyond the mere fact that he perceives them; that they are objects of his perception. In this way, by insight, the "naïve realist" becomes an idealist, and not by argument. The arguments of the realist are utterly convincing to himself. He cannot understand how any one can have misgivings as to the reality of this solid-seeming world. Then, some day, he wakes up to an altered universe; insight has come to him; he perceives that outer things have only a secondary, a dependent reality; he has become an idealist. A materialist may become an idealist, as Emerson says; but no idealist ever became a materialist. *Neque ulla retrorsum!* When we are awake, no one can convince us by argument that we are still asleep. But the awakening must come by insight, and not by argument; and this Shankara always recognises, and states again and again, with admirable lucidity. What is the first qualification for a profitable study of my idealism? he asks; and then answers himself; the first and indispensable qualification is insight; insight into the secondariness; the dependent reality of the world.

This is his famous and oft-repeated *atma-anatma-viveka;* the discerning between the primary reality of the Self, the perceiver; and the secondary reality of the not-Self, the perceived. The reality of the Self depends on the consciousness that I am I; and this consciousness does not depend on anything. but is self-dependent, self-existent, self-sufficient, and self-poised. To this primary reality, "I am I," we add the secondary reality, "I perceive outer

things;" so that the reality of outer things is, at best, a second rate, dependent reality. Or perhaps it is also primary? Perhaps outer things that have also the consciousness of I am I? If so, then they are also consciousness; they are also self; and nothing exists but consciousness.

„Problems like these are the starting point of Shankara's philosophy. With a starting point like this, where shall we expect the teacher to lead us? His conclusion is Thyself is the Eternal; and nothing is but the Eternal. But the last conclusions and even the first step to these conclusions can only be taken on the conditions Shankara himself lays down, the first condition being insight: the insight into the dependent reality of the world.

At the present moment, some of the foremost thinkers of the West are finding their way to this condition. They are already growing out of materialism; out of the "naïve realism" of the materialist school. And with their growth, the due appreciation of Shankara is becoming for the first time possible to them.

HEART'S DESIRE.

The Angels of the four Quarters met and conferred concerning Man. The great Archangel Michael had given them a charge concerning him; they had gone upon their errand, each to his own quarter of the earth, and each had failed in his mission.

Said the Angel of the North:

"When Michael told us that the Power Divine commanded that we should discover the heart's desire of man, I, as ye know, went Northward. For when all is said and done, when the result of all action is burned to an ash, it is the mind which governs Man. Even in animal man it is instinctive mind. Hence, working in that Northern region of Nature which, as ye know, exists in every point of space and is not a point of the compass, I, the Northern Power, endeavoured to satisfy man with the things of mind. Religions, gave I to him; philosophies; the clear light of science, penetrating through great spaces of time. Ever as man asked more, I gave more; as he explored, I revealed. His every demand has been met. Man has wearied, not I. He has turned him again and again, from the things of the Mind. In the Northern quarter his heart's desire cannot be found."

The Angel of the North paused, proudly defiant, and his eyes sought the Angel of the Southern quarter with a passive expectancy in their look as of one who again sees defeat coming from a point already forseen.

But the Angel of the South smiled; it was a warm sweet smile which made the summer seem at hand, and he said:

"I too, have failed, as our brother of the North has failed—if indeed he will not still succeed. But I—Ihave given to man the things of the heart, those which most men so readily pursue. Love, passion, affection; the emotions and the emotional forms of music, Religion and the Arts; love of country too, the fire of patriotism; the fevered fret of the senses and the sweet satisfactions of the affectional nature. All these lures have I spread, and man has followed after, eagerly, keenly pursuing as a child pursues one winged thing after another. Yet always he wearies. Always he turns from me to you, my Brothers. True, he returns again to

me, but again, in a flash of reaction, he is gone. His heart's desire is not with me. I confess it. In the all pervading Southern plane of human nature there is no permanent satisfaction. Never once have I quenched the desire fire; I only excite it. For me it burns higher, higher, still higher and reacts in leaps and bounds towards the North, that still fine coolness from which I am forever expelled." And regret was in the sweet look which he turned upon the Northern Angel, who gazed back with eyes lit by a swift and shining spark.

Then arose the Angel whose charge was the Western Quarter.

"I went, as you know, to that place which is mine, thinking easily to discover the heart's desire of Man. For, as I see him, an intense activity is his, a bland of brain and feeling which causes him to desire and discover, to know,to invent, to excel. Man feels nearer the gods when he creates. These faculties have I stimulated. The inventions of man are marvels. His brain activity is prodigious. Just when he seems most insatiable, just when I ask myself if my own resources will be overtaxed and will fail, man drops the pursuit as a bird folds its wings in mid air and falls. His heart's desire is never with me. I never remotely touch it. I too have failed." And he ranged himself at the side of the Southern and Northern Angels, and all three looked steadfastly upon the Angel of the Eastern Quarter.

The Eastern Angel did not return their gaze. Unlike them, he had been seated, and he continued to sit, his eyes downcast, his finger tracing strange characters upon the rock. They had never understood him, and no one ever knew if he understood them at all: his ways were silent ways; his eyelids were rarely lifted. Yet his Brothers knew that at any moment a sudden light might break from his speech, or his least movement. Among themselves they called him the Wonder Worker, for the Eastern Angel knew the things of the Soul.

He did not now raise his eyes, however, but spoke as one who speaks in a dream.

"As ye know, I went to mine own place. The things which happen there, it is not lawful to utter. Nor are they reflected in any speech. It must thus suffice that I say I too have failed. Men of all Lands have I approached, in their millions, and some held

converse with me, but none have I held or retained. The Heart's Desire is not with me. I have said."

And he folded his pinions above his bent head, plunging again into meditation within their shadow.

His brother Angels looked at one another with something like a wondering consternation in their eyes. The Divine Mandate was not obeyed. But before they had regained self-possession, a rainbow halo shone upon them and Michael stood in their midst answering their salutations with the salute of his drawn sword.

"I heard," he gravely said. "Yet this state cannot last. From the Power Divine itself went forth the Mandate that the Heart's Desire of Humanity should become known to the Angels of the four Quarters."

"Cans't thou not tell it us, Michael, thou who wert once human, as we were never?" asked the Southern Angel.

"It is not known to me or to my Brother Archangels," Michael gravely said. "For see, we are as gods and our consciousness has passed on upwards and inward to the god state, forgetting the human. Hence there has arisen a want in the Spiritual World, where the Angels know no longer the deepest need of Man and cannot truly keep him until that basic need is known."

Again the consternation dawning in their eyes!

"What's to be done?" the three exclaimed.

Michael looked at the contemplative Angel of the East and he, still folded in the shadow of his wings, with a gesture pointed earthwards. Michael bent himself over the rim of the heavens and the others listening likewise, became aware of a silvery note rising sweetly, steadily from the world of men. It was a mother praying to the god of her people for her son, her only child. He was a great King, a Captain among Captains, but to her he was ever her little one for whom she trembled, and so through the nights she besought her god for him; ever more anxious, ever more tender, thus she prayed:

"Thy last, best gift give to my child, oh Lord our God! Teach him to know his own heart."

Michael raised himself, triumphant, and his voice boomed like the sea.

"It is true. Man's deepest need, his innermost desire, that

which he really seeks through every form of action is what the Mother yonder prays for—to know his own heart, and the hidden mystery there."

.. SCIENTIFIC NECESSITY OF REINCARNATION.

(*Continued.*)

The ego incarnated in a physical body wears out this body with age, if not with abuse. And this same fact is true everywhere, whether in man, animal, or plant. All these wear out with old age: even the rocks crumble with time. Yet all these, having existed for ages past, still continue to exist, from age to age. This is evidence of the persistence of the plan, the idea of the form, from which the particular character or nature is not eliminated. These then, the form and the character, re-appears, reincarnates, with only such changes, as would be naturally expected under the impulse of evolution and eternal progress.

There cannot be one law of nature operating upon man's body; but what that same identical law is equally operative upon any other plane sphere or body.

The student of Theosophy therefore concludes that the reason why the body of man remains the same during many times seven years, is the idea, the plan, which decide the form the physical molecules are to be grouped into, are far more lasting than the molecule itself; in other words, that the inner astral-psychic man is more permanent and more real than the visible man. That the worn-out physical molecules, becoming useless to the real man, renew their substance in order to afford this inner man the full measure of years which is due to him. So it is with the earth also. But before we go on with our argument, we must grant that the body of a man, as a whole, corresponds to the body of the earth, that the various kinds of molecules in man's body correspond to men, animals, plants, etc., which are to the earth as the physical molecules are to a man's body. This granted, we may proceed to state, that earth also has a period of life with which every one of her molecules, the men, the animals and the plants, are identified, and which will reincarnate upon the earth, as long as this particular period of earth's life shall last. The same imperishable, or at least indefinitely lasting purpose, idea or plan, worked through long series of perishable forms. Such is the process and the law of nature, within all her domain. Hence, we say, reincarnation *is* a scientific necessity!

Once more. Reincarnation is a scientific necessity, though possibly not quite as self-evident, as the two former propositions.

Science postulates the idea of Cycles, that is, the securing periods of events. Science foretells, or rather tries to calculate, the return of a planet, or a comet. It prognosticates many things relative to the stars, all of which are based upon the fact or facts of the return, accepted as absolute truth. Science relies upon the return of the solar years, and the eclipses of sun, moon, planet or star. All is based upon the recognized fact that nature works in recurring, returning periods, otherwise, in Cycles.

Myriads of minor cycles are not noted, by reason of either their insignificance or shortness of duration.

Some of them are noticed by us, many we neither see nor recognize, nor do we think about the things affected by them. Yet we all note the yearly cycle of the sun. The four-weeked cycle of the moon, or the daily cycle of the earth's revolution. The entire cosmos operates on the plan of recurrence, of returning periods. This again is a fact in nature which can not be but true in all her Kingdoms and planes.

I repeat once more, that nature can not possibly change methods or modes on different planes. The law of recurring periods, true for the physical universe, must be true as well for the now fully admitted interior planes, the etheric fields of vibratory energy. These interior planes include, 1) the astral, 2) the cohesive (Desire) plane, as well as 3) the still finer realms of the noetic force or energy of the mind, or human soul plane.

Then comes the plane of Spirit, which exceeds the noetic with the Kinetic force. These different planes represent only different notes of the great vibratory energy, stored in cosmos, the feeders of all existences. The different degrees of ether or substance in them correspond with the degree of the achieved evolutionary progress. This difference is merely in the rate of vibrations, and therefore cannot involve an entirely different law. That which proves itself to be the law in nature upon its physical plane, must also be the inevitable law upon each and all other planes, whether we may, or may not be able to recognize or comprehend it.

If the earth as a planet, with all the beings upon it now, performs a cycle every 24 hours, this one fact demonstrates the truth of

the return of events, equal for all things and beings involved in that particular cycle. So the inhabitants, the humanity of the earth, observe the days, which succeed the nights, and all upon the earth is regulated by that cycle. That is every one is subject to this cycle as well as to every other great or small cycle. So is the earth itself, as a cosmic body, affected and regulated and controlled by the still larger cycle of the sun and the sun's sister planets in the sphere of our solar system. Further, our solar system is again controlled and dependent upon the still larger Universe and its sublime law and order. Let us now consider the cause of all this orderly material manifestation. If this physical manifestation is the result of universal law (and it cannot be anything else), that governs by the recurrence of events, and its conditions, can we imagine that the cause underlying any manifestation operates under any other law? No! the entire universe is governed and upheld by the same cause, and this cause is as effective and true with the smallest of the small as with the greatest universe of all universes.

The cause which occasions the recurring or reincarnating of events is also the cause of the recurring or reincarnating of the solar systems, of the planets and of man, who by his own acts, thoughts and will is indissolably tied to all the events constituting the Cycles of the planets, of which man forms an inseparable part. This link between man and his solar system cannot be complete if its duration is measured only by the span of any one life of man. His existence must agree in all its relations with the life of the planet of which he forms an inseparable part. For example: The same, as the molecules of his body are linked with his life, though they physically excarnate and reincarnate into his body many times, so man in his relation with his planet, must excarnate to throw off the old worn-out matter, and reincarnate to bring in combinations of matter able to renew the vigor of the life of his planet. Now the inner purpose of his body is permanent, it must endure as long as the life of his planet endures. And so when his earth changes its substantial body for a more etherial one, man will have to do the same.

To sum up my argument. It amounts to the statement that man is an inseparable part of the earth's body, and consequently his cycle of life must also be an inseparable part of the earth's cycle of

life. He is linked with the earth's entire history, from its beginning to its end, and in order to partake of the earth's progress and evolution during its own long pilgrimage, man reincarnates again and again, throughout that long journey of the earth. That is, man does for the earth what the physical molecules do for him. The universe is absolutely complete. That is, not one atom can be added to its completeness, neither can a single atom be taken away, without involving its destruction. Hence the substance in it is eternal, and ever present in some form or condition somewhere.

The same is true with regard to force or energy in this vast universe. It is also eternal, neither can any force be added or taken away. This absoluteness is complete. This force and its vehicle substance, must be in union or manifestation according to the cycle of cause and effect, which governs in duration. Energy cannot manifest unless it has substance to move, and substance to be in motion must evolve some kind of form developed by evolution, the law of eternal progress. When we witness, as we continually do, that matter appears in any new or changed form, we muse recognize that this form is a vehicle of energy, that this energy is adequate in proportion to the form and nature with which it is identified, whether that form be a molecule, a man or a planet. Therefore when energy has exhausted the endurance of the matter in which it is incarnated, this energy must obtain renewed matter, and a new form, in order to manifest. The association with a new form constitutes reincarnation, and the complete rehabilitation must be the law.

Reincarnation is the one important fact, or law, in nature, throughout the eternities of material manifestation. It is the universal law which allows no escapes or exceptions, in the case of the great Kosmos, as in the case of a planet, a man, or a molecule.

It is the great necessity relating to the Universe manifesting in Space during the eternities.

RICHARD STRAUSS, TSCHAIKOWSKY, AND THE IDEA OF DEATH.

(Reprinted, by permission, from "The Musical World.")

I have still a vivid remembrance of the last performance in New York, by Mr. Gericke and his amazing band, of Richard Strauss' "Tod und Verklärung;" and as, from time to time, that poignant and haunting score has vibrated again within my brain, it has seemed to me as if the idea of death, and that terror and despair and sadness which are its human ministers, could have no more complete and wonderful an expression than they have here. I thought, too, of that other marvelous canticle of mortality: the Pathetic Symphony of Tschaikowsky; and then I realised that Strauss, in his terrible and splendid voicing of the supreme achievement, has completed that message in whose deliverance the voice of the elder master faltered and broke—that here, in the profound and entire contrast of these two great works, is, if one chooses to discern it, the pointing of a spiritual moral.

Tschaikowsky's matchless threnody has been compared with Shelley's *Adonais,* which is its counterpart in literature: for as time, writes Shelley, 'like a many-colored dome of glass, stains the white radiance of eternity,' even so, Tschaikowsky in this symphony has "stained eternity's radiance: he has captured the years and bound them into a momentary emotional pang." What Shelley, no doubt, would have said in the utterance of his great grief, had Shelley been a musician, Tschaikowsky says in his most grievous swan-song. Here is music passionately avid of life for life's own sake—music filled, from beginning to end, "with the utter and complete darkness of the grave." The finality of death—the irrevocable oblivion of the grave—an inappeasable and hopeless grieving: that, indisputably, is the emotional substance of Tschaikowsky's tone-poem: that, beyond question, is what it says, and all that it says. One hears in it the despairful cry of that bravest optimist of them all, in one of those "downcast hours" which at times afflicted even his most valorous and steadfast spirit: "Matter is conqueror—matter, triumphant only, continues onward." Tschaikowsky reveals himself in this, his authentic masterpiece, the perfect materialist, the perfect spiritual craven. That stupendous

adagio lamentoso is a sable "garment of untruth," dyed with the hues that are gathered out of cowardice, and despair, and ignoble and supine grief. His was a mind "held ever earthward on the trail of earthly things;" his was the point of view, the spiritual outlook, of the essential barbarian. He has given, in this most intimate of his disclosures, a superlatively beautiful and puissant expression to that in himself, and in us, which is most unreclaimably and grossly earth-bound—to the animal, to the vestige of the savage in us: to that lamentation over the precious things of the sensual life which, communicating its panic and despair to all who hear, diverts the eyes from the vision of those immutable things by virtue of whose perception alone do we approach the gods. For those of us to whom this world seems not wholly ill-designed: who find no shuddering horror in the thought of death, but rather a surety of promotion and fulfillment—for those of us, I say, who so incline, this music overwhelms with the sense of an immense and futile pathos, and a tragic falsity as maleficent as it is complete.

And let me now turn to a consideration, from the spiritual side, of that magnificent elegy in which I have found so vital and suggestive a contrast with the work of the Slavonic master.

When Richard Strauss set down the last note of his "Tod und Verklärung" he brought to a superb completion a score which is, I am convinced, the most momentous and significant achievement in post-Wagnerian music. It is, throughout, greatly conctived and greatly accomplished. There is not, from beginning to end, the slightest dependence upon mere theatricalism of effect—no sensation contrived simply for sensation's sake: but rather a stupendously eloquent enunciation of the terror, the awe, the pathos, of the essential episode of death, and, finally, of the majesty and perfection of an ultimate fulfillment, a triumphant spiritual survival.

I am fully aware that this is praise of a work which has been comfortably disposed of by some as "charnel-house" music, the unwholesome issue of a disordered imagination—what excess of morbidly realistic imagery has not been discovered in Strauss' score by certain critical intelligences! And yet I prefer rather to agree with another and juster view, that here is music "in which there is no morbit taint, in which there is the full justification of death."

And how wonderful a justification! What a solemn and haunting tenderness, what a continuity of sheer loveliness, in the brooding passages of the opening—and how keenly the authentic mood, the atmosphere of the thing, pierces one from the start; what an immensity of passion in the phases of revolt and aspiration, and how appalling is the moment of translation! But—and here is the significant point—Strauss does not stop at that portentous episode, that heart-chilling crisis of extreme dismay: dissolution is not for him, as for Tschaikowsky, an inexorable conclusion, an irretrievable exit: he confronts us, as we are confronted in the *"Pathétique,* with the very gates of death, but, unlike Tschaikowsky, he does not leave us there, overwhelmed and shuddering in the darkness. Out of that terrible quietude emerges an increasing chant, a gradual and suffusing radiance. Note by note the transfiguration is accomplished—"and when he is wrapt by the radiance, the bright one no longer sees dreams: then within him the bliss arises"—so may one point the moral of a tone-poem of to-day with the immemorial wisdom of the East!

If I can find so luminous and high a message in "Tod und Verklärung," I shall scarcely assume to regard Richard Strauss as a deliberate and conscious seer; and I doubt if he would care, or that he deserves, to be called a mystic. Great musician and poet that he is, he is neither so deep nor so wide as the *Upanishads.* But I shall insist, nevertheless, upon claiming for him that he has, after some manner of his own, "beheld the indwelling spirit;" and that he has chosen, "knowing that knowable spirit," to say to us, with the incomparable prophet of the Orient: "Let not death disturb you."

...A Reprint...

Of Mr. W. Q. Judge's Edition of the

BHAGAVAD GITA

Has been prepared and can be supplied
for 75 cents, postage paid.

Other books on Theosophical, Philosophical and Religious subjects can be secured through the Secretary T. S. A.,
Box 1584, New York City.

SECOND YEAR
of
THE WA-WAN PRESS
Newton Center, Massachusetts.

WE INVITE THE ATTENTION OF

All musicians, *All* music lovers, *All* who wish to have American compositions that stand for artistic progress, *All* who wish to make an incomparable *ARTISTIC* gift to a musical friend, *All* who see that the Declaration of Independence is inevitably beginning to include music, *All* who see that America's specific gains in musical composition are the world's gains

TO THE FACT

That we are making it possible, for the first time, to procure that work of our composers which represents their highest talents and ideals, printed in an attractive and artistic manner, at a LESS PRICE, than is given for the most ordinary sheet music,

That we wish to make our composers living realities to our subscribers,

That the Wa-Wan Press stands for no particular composer or cotérie, but for American composition.

For particulars write to **THE WA-WAN PRESS,**
Newton Center, Massachusetts.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

Founded by H. P. BLAVATSKY at New York in 1875.

The Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics.*

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *Path* to tread in this."

The expenses of the Theosophical Society in America are met by Dues of Two Dollars, and voluntary contributions, which should be sent to the Treasurer T. S. A., Box 1584, New York, N. Y.

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S. A., P. O. Box 1584, New York.